



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

June 3, 2008

Dear Bluefin Tuna Exporter,

On June 2, 2008, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published a final rule (73 FR 31380) that amended regulations governing the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) International Trade Permit Program (ITP). The new regulations are effective July 2, 2008. You will be receiving additional information in the near future. However, some countries that participate in the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) are implementing the bluefin tuna catch document (BCD) sooner. This letter contains the information necessary for you to begin voluntarily using the BCD in the event that you are engaged in trade with those countries. Until the amended regulations go into effect, reporting requirements associated with the statistical document program, including biweekly reports, continue to apply.

The BCD program was adopted by ICCAT at its 2007 annual meeting. The main purpose of the new program is to better account for harvest of the eastern bluefin tuna stock in the Mediterranean Sea. The new program will replace the ICCAT bluefin tuna statistical document program.

The new BCD may be required by foreign nations for import of bluefin tuna beginning June 4, 2008. NMFS strongly suggests that all bluefin tuna exports and re-exports use the new forms when engaged in trade with those countries. The forms are located at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ITP/>. Below is a summary of the applicable requirements for using these new BCD forms.

1. Each BCD must be numbered according to the following formula:

**US2008 – HMS ITP Permit Number (e.g. SE-10543) – Sequential Number**

For example, a bluefin tuna exporter with the ITP permit number “SE 10543” who is exporting his first bluefin tuna shipment using a BCD for the 2008 year would enter the following BCD number: US2008-10543-1. The second export would use the following number: US2008-10543-2.

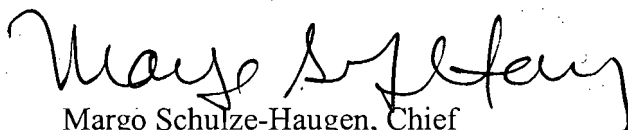
2. Each BCD may only contain bluefin tuna from a single vessel. If bluefin tuna exports are comprised of catch from more than one vessel, a separate BCD must be filled out for each vessel. Exporters may need to contact the Atlantic Tuna Dealer Permit holder who first purchased the bluefin tuna to obtain all the information needed to complete each BCD.



3. Re-export certificates are now required for every bluefin tuna re-export.
4. Copies of re-export certificates for untagged re-exports must be sent to the ICCAT Secretariat and government of the importing nation.

If you have any additional questions, you may contact Dianne Stephan or Kathy Goldsmith at 978-281-9260.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margo Schulze-Haugen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Margo" being more prominent.

Margo Schulze-Haugen, Chief  
HMS Management Division,  
National Marine Fisheries Service